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ABSTRACT

In this study, a performance-based assessment was used to examine the effects of preservice preparation factors on culturally responsive teaching (CRT). The measure used to assess CRT among beginning teachers was derived from Praxis III, an assessment system developed by the Educational Testing Services and infused with sensitivity to culture as an integral part of effective teaching. A subset of Praxis III criteria was identified through a survey of experts and used to explore whether the selected skills of beginning teachers with high levels of preparation in CRT differ from the skills of those with low preparation in CRT, and whether selected CRT skills of special education beginning teachers differ from those of general education beginning teachers. Observations of 35 special education beginning teachers and 33 regular education beginning teachers found there were no significant differences among the teachers due to preservice preparation level, but there were significant differences between general education and special education teachers on three criteria: knowledge of students' backgrounds, fairness, and extending students' thinking. (CR)

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Teacher Preparation for Diverse Classrooms: Performance-based Assessment of Beginning Teachers

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FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

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Final Performance Report

In this study, a performance-based assessment was used to examine the effects of preservice preparation factors on culturally responsive teaching (CRT). The measure used to assess CRT among beginning teachers was derived from Praxis III, an assessment system developed by the Educational Testing Service and infused with sensitivity to culture as an integral part of effective teaching. A subset of Praxis III criteria was identified through a survey of experts and used to answer the following questions: (a) do selected skills of beginning teachers with high levels of preparation in CRT differ from the skills of those with low preparation in CRT and (b) do selected CRT skills of special education beginning teachers differ from those of general education beginning teachers? Observations of 68 beginning teacher graduates (35 in special education and 33 in general education) in Florida yielded Praxis III on nine criteria scores for each participant; the scores were subjected to a multivariate analysis of variance to answer the above research questions.

Grant Objectives and Activities

Participant Selection

The participant pool for the study was selected, using a stratified random sampling procedure, from general and special education graduates from four state

universities in Florida. Teachers identified were asked to participate in the study. The sample of 68 beginning teacher volunteers resulted.

Instrumentation

The measure used for the study consisted of the Praxis III performance-based assessment developed by ETS. However, the criteria were narrowed to focus on teacher behaviors that might have a particular impact on the education of culturally and/or linguistically diverse (CLD) students. A survey of experts in the field was used to narrow the 29 Praxis III criteria to 9, using a modified Delphi technique.

Observations and Assessments

Two trained assessors observed the 68 volunteer beginning teacher participants during the second semester of the academic year. Participants were given assessment criteria descriptions ahead of time, and each teacher was observed for a full class period (40-60 minutes). Assessors then assigned scores to the nine selected criteria according to procedures specified by the Praxis III assessment system. Assessors assured participants that information obtained would be strictly confidential and provided written feedback to those who desired it.

Determination of Levels of Preservice Preparation in CRT

Responses to two post observation interview questions concerning preservice preparation in CRT were used to assign participants to one of two levels of preparation. Two components of preparation—amount of coursework in CRT and internship

experience with diverse student populations—were scored independently by two researchers; scores were totaled and participants were assigned to either the high, medium, or low category of preparation.

Data Analysis and Results

The Praxis III domains and criteria are not assumed to be statistically independent; therefore, scores were submitted to a 2 X 2 (with level of CRT training and GE versus SE as grouping variables) multivariate analysis of variance, followed by univariate analyses to determine group effects on individual criteria. Demographic data on participants were submitted to Chi Square tests for relationships between teacher characteristics such as age or gender and grouping variables. Overall results did not yield significant differences due to preservice preparation level, but significant differences between GE and SE teachers were found on three criteria: Knowledge of students' backgrounds, fairness, and extending students' thinking.

Dissemination

The following presentations and manuscripts were conducted or prepared during the funding period of the grant:

Daunic, A. P. (1996). *Teacher preparation for diverse classrooms: Performance-based assessment of beginning teachers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.

Daunic, A. P., & Eisele, M. (1997, November). *Teacher Preparation for Diverse Classrooms: Performance-based Assessment of Beginning Teachers*. Annual conference of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, Washington, D.C.

Daunic, A. P., & Reyes-Blanes, M. (1997, November). *"Good Teaching" for Culturally Diverse Classrooms: What Multicultural Experts Say about Basic Teaching Competencies*. Annual conference of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, Washington, D.C.

Eisele, M., and Daunic, A. (1996, November). *The effects of teacher preparation on classroom performance of beginning teachers in special and regular education.* Annual conference of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, Washington, D.C.

Issues in multicultural education. (1995, November). Presentation to doctoral students in Teacher Education seminar, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

Reyes-Blanes, M. E., & Daunic, A. P. (1996). Culturally responsive pedagogy: An imperative approach to instruction. The Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students, 17 (Special issue), 103-119.

Daunic, A. P. & Blanes, M. Evaluating beginning teachers in culturally responsive pedagogy: What should we assess? Submitted for publication.

Daunic, A. P. Teacher preparation for diverse classrooms: Performance-based assessment of beginning teachers. Manuscript in preparation.